

BOROUGH OF BOSTON

AND

PORT HEALTH AUTHORITY

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR 1944



BOROUGH OF BOSTON
AND
PORT HEALTH AUTHORITY.
TO

The Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Boston.

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you my Report of the Health of the Borough and Port of Boston, during the year 1944.

During the year in question all the Health services have been maintained and the results have been satisfactory.

In spite of five years of war the general standard of health has been surprisingly good. This is largely due to the fact that continual supervision and action where necessary, has kept the parents up to the scratch. Certain cases of neglect of children have been taken to court, and convictions obtained. These, however, are very much in the minority and the general population have responded very well to the recommendations made to them.

The Health Centre, opened in January, has been a great success and as will be seen from the statistics the number attending the various clinics has been eminently satisfactory.

The Cleansing Station, chiefly for scabies, has worked very well. The method of treating scabies has impressed itself upon the population and the great majority of the cases have been cured with one treatment of Benzyl Benzoate. During the year there have been 342 treatments. Scabies became a notifiable disease in the Borough on the 27th June, 1944.

The birth rate has risen and the death rate fallen slightly. The infant mortality rate shows a remarkable decrease from 45 to 29.6. This, in my opinion, is largely due to ante-natal examinations, both at the hospital and the ante-natal clinic, abnormalities being recognised and the life of the infant saved.

Infectious diseases occurring in the Borough are about the normal. Scarlet fever cases have increased somewhat and diphtheria remains low. Three cases of typhoid were notified but in spite of extensive enquiries, no definite cause could be traced.

On the whole then, a very successful year, in spite of five years of war, and the staff are to be congratulated on the results of continuous hard work and enthusiasm for the good of the town.

I am,

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,
D. C. ROBERTSON.

Public Health Department,
6, Bridge Street,
Boston, Lincs.

SECTION A.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY.

Area (in acres)	3,255
Number of inhabited houses according to Rate Books (March 31st, 1944)	6,708
Rateable Value (March 31st, 1944)	£130,124
Sum represented by a penny rate	£521
Population	21,350

VITAL STATISTICS, 1944.

	Total	Male	Female
Live Births—Legitimate	404	210	194
Illegitimate	34	18	16
Stillbirths—Legitimate	13	6	7
Illegitimate	—	—	—
Deaths	251	131	120
Birth rate per 1,000 population			20.51
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total (live & still) births			28.82
Death rate per 1,000 of the population			11.76

DEATH RATE OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE

(a) All infants per 1,000 live births	29.61
(b) Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	24.75
(c) Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	88.23
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	nil.
Deaths from Whooping Cough	nil.
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	2
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	49

SECTION B.

LABORATORY AND AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

The war-time facilities for laboratory and ambulance service are still in force, and have functioned satisfactorily.

The following Laboratories are still available to carry out the examination of bacteriological and pathological specimens from the district, if required :—

- (1) The Public Health Laboratory, Technical College, LINCOLN.
- (2) The Public Health Laboratory, Isolation Hospital, Groby Road, LEICESTER.

NURSING IN THE HOME.

The arrangements operated by the Boston and District Nursing Association remained unchanged during the year.

Nothing further has been done with regard to the provision of Home Helps. It is difficult in war-time to get the necessary women to run such a scheme, although in my opinion it is a service that is urgently called for. During the present year (1945) some action has been taken and it is to be hoped that with the end of hostilities some definite scheme will be evolved.

TREATMENT CENTRES AND CLINICS.

Arrangements in connection with the Tuberculosis Dispensary and the Venereal Diseases Clinic remain unchanged.

The Infant Welfare Centre, and the Ophthalmic Clinic, are being held at the Health Centre, 4, London Road, and the change of venue has proved most satisfactory.

CLEANSING STATION.

A new health service has been inaugurated during the year, viz : the Cleansing Station at 4, London Road.

195 school children and 147 other persons residing in the Borough have received treatment, and in the vast majority of cases, one cleansing has proved sufficient.

Time is showing that this new service is most beneficial and every encouragement is given to persons suffering from scabies, etc., to make full use of it.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

ANTE-NATAL CLINIC.

An Ante-Natal Clinic for expectant mothers was opened at the Health Centre, 4, London Road, on 17th January, 1944, the Consultant being Dr. A. Eckford. During the year 46 sessions have been held and 304 examinations made.

Arising out of the examinations, 5 cases have been referred for X-Ray and 53 for Dental treatment, and the clinic can be said to have been a great success.

MIDWIFERY SERVICES.

The Holland County Council is the Supervising Authority for the Borough under the Midwives Act, 1936.

MATERNITY SERVICES.

Eight beds are set aside in Boston Maternity Ward for Borough cases. These are almost wholly booked up months ahead and cases have had to be transferred to the County Hospital, showing a need for further maternity bed accommodation.

A total of 99 mothers was admitted to the Maternity Unit through the Borough Scheme as compared with 82 last year.

BOSTON INFANT WELFARE CENTRE.

The work of the Infant Welfare Centre has been carried out satisfactorily under existing conditions. The supply of dried foods has been maintained in spite of war-time conditions. The number of attendances at the Centre for the year was 8,166, slightly lower than last year.

Arrangements for Dental, Orthopaedic, Ophthalmic and Tonsils and Adenoids cases.

TONSILS AND ADENOIDS.

12 children under five years of age received operative treatment in the Boston General Hospital, for Tonsils and Adenoids.

ORTHOPAEDIC TREATMENT.

54 attendances were made by children at Mr. Pilcher's Out-patient Department at the Holland Sanatorium for Orthopaedic treatment. The number of In-patients treated during the year was 3.

OPHTHALMIC TREATMENT.

48 attendances were made by children at the Ophthalmic clinic during the year.

DENTAL TREATMENT.

18 children were referred from the Welfare Centre during the year to receive Dental Treatment.

BOSTON DAY NURSERY.

The Day Nursery has continued to function successfully during the year. The number of attendances has increased from 7,748 to 8,907. During the summer season the nursery was filled to capacity and there were several on the waiting list. I am sure the Day Nursery does very good service to the community, and the babies and toddlers are properly looked after.

Failing their attendance there, the babies are looked after by other women in their homes, in many cases not a very satisfactory proceeding.

SECTION C.

WATER SUPPLY.

I am indebted to Mr. T. H. Tyson, Waterworks Engineer, for the following report on the Borough Water Supply :—

The rainfall during the year was about the average, and the rainfall for the past six years was as follows :—

1939	...	...	...	...	31.18 ins.
1940	...	...	...	...	27.17 „
1941	...	...	...	...	25.78 „
1942	...	...	...	...	21.62 „
1943	...	...	...	...	21.73 „
1944	...	...	...	...	25.17 „

The average rainfall for the past 41 years is 25.73 ins.

The Miningsby Beck ceased to flow on July 20th and was dry for 39 days, and commenced to flow again on August 25th for three days and was dry again until September 3rd.

Owing to the difficulty in obtaining spare parts for repairs to the pumping plant it was with the greatest difficulty that the supply from Fordington was maintained.

The demands are still increasing due to Service and Trade requirements.

Water samples for analysis have been taken regularly throughout the year and all the reports have been satisfactory.

Samples of the raw water were taken some time ago.

Revesby Reservoir.—Upland gathering ground from cultivated land.

Fordington.—Deep boreholes in Spilsby sandstone.

The water from Revesby Reservoir is treated with alumina ferric filtered through mechanical pressure filters and chlorinated before being passed to supply.

The water from Fordington is chlorinated before being passed to supply.

The water from both sources being alkaline there is no tendency to plumbo-solvent-action.

Approximately 300 premises in the area of supply are supplied by standpipes. With an exception of a portion of the 300 mentioned above all the houses in the Borough are supplied direct.

SECTION D.

HOUSING AND SANITATION, ETC.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The sanitary circumstances of the Borough underwent practically no change during the year. The usual routine inspections were carried out by the Sanitary Staff, and the position at the end of the year was entirely satisfactory.

RODENT CONTROL.

A Pests Officer has been appointed in connection with the Infestation Order, 1943, and the whole of the Borough has been surveyed to ascertain the degree of infestation.

The work of pre-and-poison baiting the sewers and other premises has met with very encouraging results.

HOUSING.

There was little or no systematic house-to-house inspection carried out during the year 1944.

It has become increasingly difficult to get repairs carried out owing to the acute shortage of labour, and many of the repairs have had to be done departmentally.

Every endeavour was made, however, to deal with the more urgent repairs in order to maintain a reasonable standard of fitness.

It is now hoped that with the end of hostilities a certain amount of labour will become available for this important work, but it is obvious that the needs will not be met for many years.

SEWERAGE.

There has been no extension of the system during the war.

The temporary housing scheme sewers will discharge sewage into the existing system and storm water into the River Witham.

During the war period there has been little interruption of the sewage system other than a few hours due to the severing of an electricity cable during an air raid, which only affected the main pumping station, Church Road.

REFUSE COLLECTION.

In view of the Salvage Campaign refuse collection was changed during the war from once per week to once in every fortnight. Except for short periods of heavy snowfalls and sickness among workmen this work has been regularly and satisfactorily carried out and kept up to time.

Rainfall for 1944 (Recorded at Church Road Pumping Station).

January	...	...	...	...	2.27 ins.
February	...	...	...	...	1.87 "
March	...	...	...	...	0.28 "
April	...	...	...	...	1.70 "
May	...	...	...	...	0.83 "
June	...	...	...	...	2.41 "
July	...	...	...	...	1.74 "
August	...	...	...	...	2.57 "
September	...	...	...	...	4.01 "
October	...	...	...	...	2.42 "
November	...	...	...	...	3.72 "
December	...	...	...	...	1.14 "

Greatest intensity : 2nd September, 1944—0.15 ins. in 15 minutes.

SECTION E.

MILK SUPPLY.

This has been anything but satisfactory and frequent complaints have been received of the poor keeping quality of the milk.

It is very much to be desired that all milk should be heat treated and that the scheme embodying this should be brought into force as soon as possible.

The duties of supervision at the places of production is now largely carried out in an advisory capacity by the local War Agricultural Executive Committee, but any structural alterations required to premises are dealt with by the local Sanitary Authority.

The inspections of the dairies within the Borough were carried out systematically during the year and conditions were found to be generally satisfactory.

Samples of all milks were taken for examination by the Plate Count and Methyline Blue Reduction Tests, and in the case of Pasteurised milk for Phosphatase Test in order to ascertain whether or not the milk has been correctly Pasteurised.

During the hot days of the summer some difficulty was met with by the souring of the milk, but this is not to be wondered at when one finds, in effect, that the milk may be at least 48 hours old. The mixing of the milk and the wide area from which it is drawn are no doubt contributory causes of this souring.

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

Under the control of the Livestock Scheme, carried out by the Ministry of Food, one centralised slaughterhouse has been in use in the Borough serving needs for the Boston Borough and the Boston Rural District.

The meat inspection is carried out by a qualified meat inspector in accordance with Memo 62/Food.

	Beef.	Mutton.	Pork.
Carcases examined	2458	5651	2412
Carcases condemned	74	12	101
Total weight condemned ...	40 tons 11 cwts. 2 qr. 6lbs.		

PREPARED FOOD PREMISES.

All premises used in connection with the manufacture of food-stuffs are registered by the local authority under the Food and Drugs Act.

Inspections are regularly carried out, and despite war conditions a fairly high standard of cleanliness has been maintained.

THE ADULTERATION OF FOODS—INSPECTIONS.

With the coming into operation of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, on the 1st October, 1939, the duties of sampling were transferred to the Holland County.

SECTION F.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

The following Infectious Diseases were notified during the year :—

Typhoid	3
Scabies	24
Scarlet Fever	61
Whooping Cough	14
Diphtheria	5
Measles	8
Pneumonia	15
Puerperal Pyrexia	1
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	9
Chicken Pox	143
Malaria	1
Food Poisoning	5

LABORATORY FACILITIES—PROVISION OF SERA.

Medical Practitioners are given every opportunity for the examination of clinical material, and fees are paid by the Authority where necessary.

The work is carried out at the Laboratory of the Holland County Council.

TUBERCULOSIS.

No action was necessary during the year under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, or Section 172 of the Public Health Act, 1936.

BOSTON PORT HEALTH AUTHORITY.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR 1944.

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit the following brief report on the work carried out in connection with the Port Health Administration during the year ended 31st December 1944:—

SHIPPING ENTERING THE PORT DURING THE YEAR.

Of the total number of foreign and coastwise ships entering the Port during the year, the following are particulars regarding inspections carried out, defects remedied, etc.:—

NUMBER INSPECTED.

(a) By Medical Officer of Health	Nil
(b) By Sanitary Inspector	Nil
Number reported to be defective	Nil
Number of vessels on which defects were remedied	Nil
Number of vessels reported as having or as having had during the voyage infectious diseases ...	Nil

PORT SANITARY REGULATIONS, 1933.

Infectious Diseases Notified.

Cases of Infectious Sickness landed from vessels during the year	Nil
Cases of Infectious sickness, occurring on vessels during the voyage, but disposed of prior to arrival	Nil

MEASURES AGAINST RODENTS.

Rats Destroyed During 1944.

(1) On vessels	Nil
(2) In Docks, Quays, Wharves and Warehouses Disinfestation carried out by Port Health Authority.	

Issue of Deratisation and Deratisation Exemption Certificates.

No certificates have been issued during the year, as Boston is not an approved Port. Certificates when required have been obtained from Grimsby.

FOOD INSPECTION.

No action was found to be necessary during the year under the Public Health (Imported Food) Regulations, 1937, the Public Health (Preservatives) Regulations, 1925 to 1939, and the Public Health (Imported Milk) Regulations, 1926.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SHELLFISH) REGULATIONS, 1934.

There are Mussel and Cockle Beds within the area of the Port Health Authority in the Wash. These are periodically inspected and samples of the shell-fish are taken for analysis.

I am,

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

D. C. ROBERTSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

